

# MOUNT VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT



## ***STRATEGIC PLAN***

***2008-2012***

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## **MOUNT VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

### ***Meeting the Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

One certainty in policing is constant evolution and change. In order to continue to provide the best services possible, it is imperative we keep pace with transformations that occur both in policing and in our community.

A policing agency with strong ethics and integrity will equate to a superior agency that does the right thing for the right reason.

The key to a strong and vibrant department is largely dependant on the quality of its employees. Recruiting and hiring police officers is becoming increasingly more difficult. While we work hard to attract candidates, the number of “quality” candidates has diminished dramatically. This is a local, regional and national trend. While some agencies have bowed to pressure to fill positions by lowering hiring standards, we have not. To do so is risky and could eventually erode the community’s trust in us.

Our ability to keep up with the constantly changing technological advances is a major challenge. Some of the more important changes in this regard involve the use of computers as a tool by criminals to commit crimes. The evolution of the use of DNA in identifying the guilt or innocence of a person suspected of a crime has been dramatic.

The use of surveillance cameras to detect crimes in real-time or afterwards has gained national popularity. We have achieved successes through the city camera surveillance program in identifying and arresting criminals. In an effort to be more efficient we are transitioning to a test program in the use of e-ticketing for the issuance of infractions and citations.

Technology advances in investigating crimes from the initial call through conviction is also a priority. We must remain firm on maintaining hiring practices that ensure we employ staff that is educated with maturity, integrity, honesty, and is well trained and equipped with the tools and skills necessary to deal with the issues and problems of our complex society.

There have been many changes that attempt to ensure the safety of citizens nationally with regard to terrorism. Locally, we have benefited from the

resources allocated towards preventing terrorism. Local agencies have received radios which enhance communications and interoperability. A regional Northwest Incident Management Team has been developed to assist local agencies in the management of unusual occurrences. Our hope is to use these resources to purchase a reverse 911 system that will be available to all cities in Skagit County to utilize for unusual occurrences and for other public safety purposes.

It is not uncommon for citizens to express their viewpoint on a wide range of issues and topics. We see this through direct public contacts, the media, and demonstrators who protest specific issues. This has created increased challenges and responsibility for the Department and community in how we respond. We have found that an open and honest exchange between the Department and citizens can help dramatically in working through these types of issues.

Community expectations in how we, as an organization, can be responsive in providing resources to ensure that we continue to live and work in a safe environment are very high. The citizenry, especially with the current economic climate, demands we be as efficient as possible. To ensure that we do just that requires a critical eye on budgeting, staffing, and re-thinking how best to respond to calls for service.

As we look to the future, we must place a strong emphasis on strategic and operational planning. To act in the contrary will be moving forward looking through a fog unsure of our destiny or of the results we may achieve. As you work your way through this document, it will become very clear of our purpose and the direction we are taking to continue to make our community a great place to live and work.



## **WHO WE SERVE**

*The continuous focus on the residents and visitors of Mount Vernon*

The community of Mount Vernon is made up of 30,150 residents (2008 est.) and is the center of county government. Since 2000, there has been a 14.9% percent increase (2008 est.) in population in Mount Vernon.

Skagit Valley Community College hosts students from throughout the region and provides an array of academic and vocational learning opportunities for several thousand people.

The demographic face of Mount Vernon has been changing over the last several years as the population continues to increase. The area is viewed as an attractive place to live due to its rural feel, abundant recreational opportunities, proximity to the Bellingham/Seattle/Everett job market and lesser-expensive real estate. In 2007, Mount Vernon represented 25% of the County's total population. This percentage has been constant for several years however; is expected to take a larger share over the next several years due to an increase in growth within the City and a gradual population decline in unincorporated areas of the County (50.4% in 1970 to 42.2% in 2007).

Cultural and language differences have created communications challenges. Over twenty-five percent (2006 est.) of the community's population and over 50% of enrolled students in the Mount Vernon School District are Hispanic (2008 MVSD). Calculating the population 0-24 years of age county-wide indicates the percentage among the Hispanic population in 2008 is 58%. When looking at the total county-wide population in 2008 which includes Hispanic's, the percentage drops to 33%.

Another factor that will dramatically affect policing over the next fifteen years is the anticipated growth of our younger and senior populations. By the year 2010, approximately 35% of our population will be under the age of 20. This is the prime age for first exposure to criminal activity. Currently, that group represents 33% of the local population (2000 census). Locally, 18% of children are raised in single-parent families and 11% of families are living below the poverty level (2000 census). The high school drop-out rate is 9.2% (2008 MVSD). Youth violence in Mount Vernon continues to show disturbing signs of increasing as new offenders emerge and violent offenders that had been serving prison terms return to the community.

The elderly (over 65 years of age) make up over 12.5% of our counties population (2000 census) and that figure is expected to grow. Senior citizens are frequently victimized by thieves and confidence professionals. Many of the crimes against the elderly are "hidden", resulting in considerable investigative time being spent in this area.



## WHO WE ARE

**It is the Mission of the Mount Vernon Police Department** *“To consistently seek and find ways to affirmatively promote, preserve and deliver a feeling of security, safety and productive, quality service to citizens and visitors of the community”.*

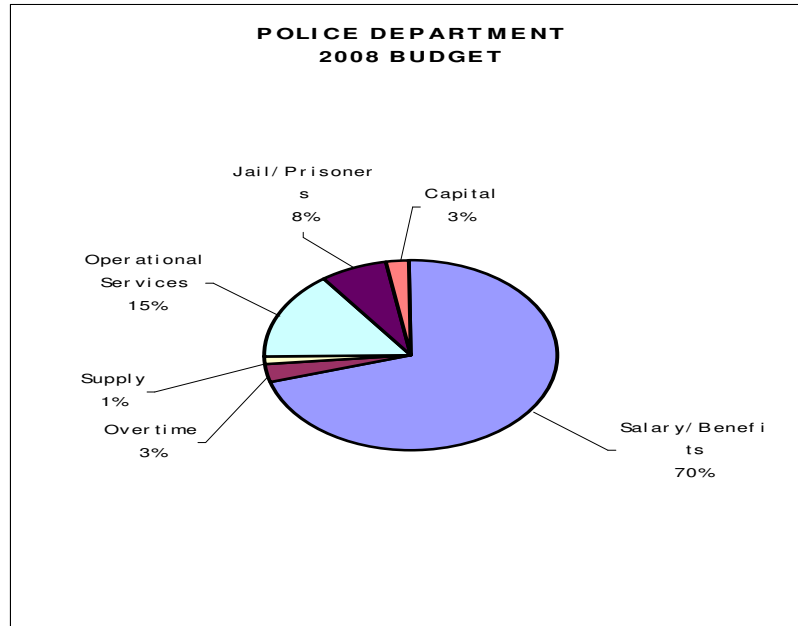
To fulfill its important mission, the Department has a **FY2008 total budget** of **\$6,637,596**. Funding is appropriated as follows:

Salaries, Benefits	\$4,644,137
Overtime	\$ 227,425
Supply	\$ 62,970
Operational Services	\$ 1,019,167
Care & Custody of Prisoners	\$ 516,438
Capital Needs (Incl REET)	\$ 167,459

**Total Budget** **\$6,637,596**

The City of Mount Vernon also allocates funding for county-wide public safety communications and E911 services.

**Communications/E911** **\$ 149,685**

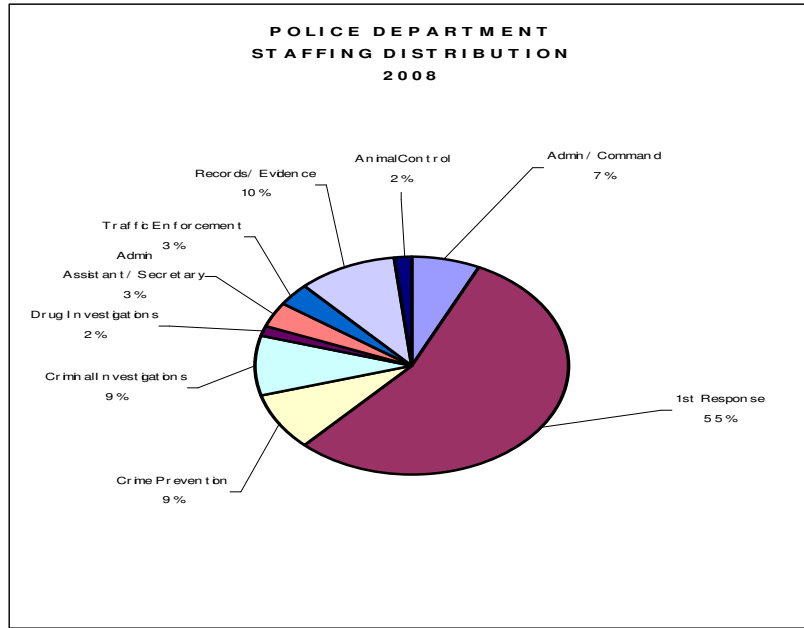


The Department's 2008 **authorized strength** consists of forty-five commissioned officers, three Community Service Officers, one Animal Control Officer, and nine non-sworn support personnel, for a total of 58 employees. In addition, approximately 50 volunteers provide a variety of services in support of Department programs. Staffing is arranged as follows:

- 1 - Chief of Police
- 3 - Division Lieutenants
- 6 - Squad Sergeants
- 35 - Police Officers
- 3 - Community Service Officers
- 1 - Records Manager
- 5 - Records Specialists
- 1 - Administrative Assistant
- 1 - Secretary
- 1 - Receptionist
- 1 - Animal Control

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58 - Total Personnel

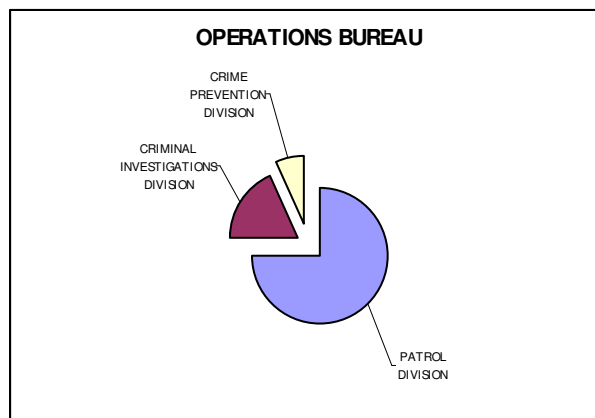


## FUNCTIONAL DIVISIONS

The Police Department is arranged in two (2) Bureaus and six (6) subordinate Divisions.

The **Operations Bureau** is comprised of the following Divisions:

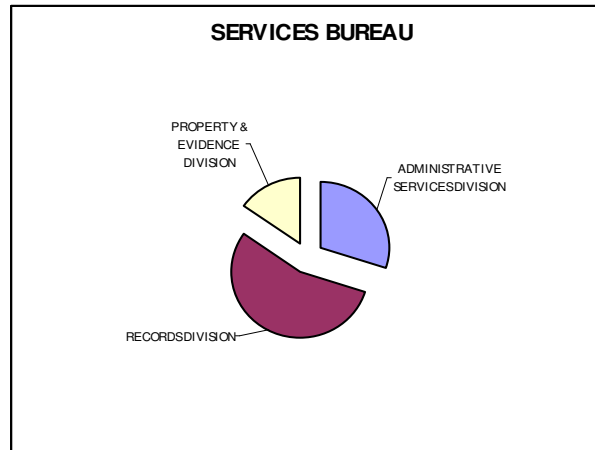
- Patrol
- Criminal Investigations
- Crime Prevention





The **Services Bureau** is comprised of the following Divisions:

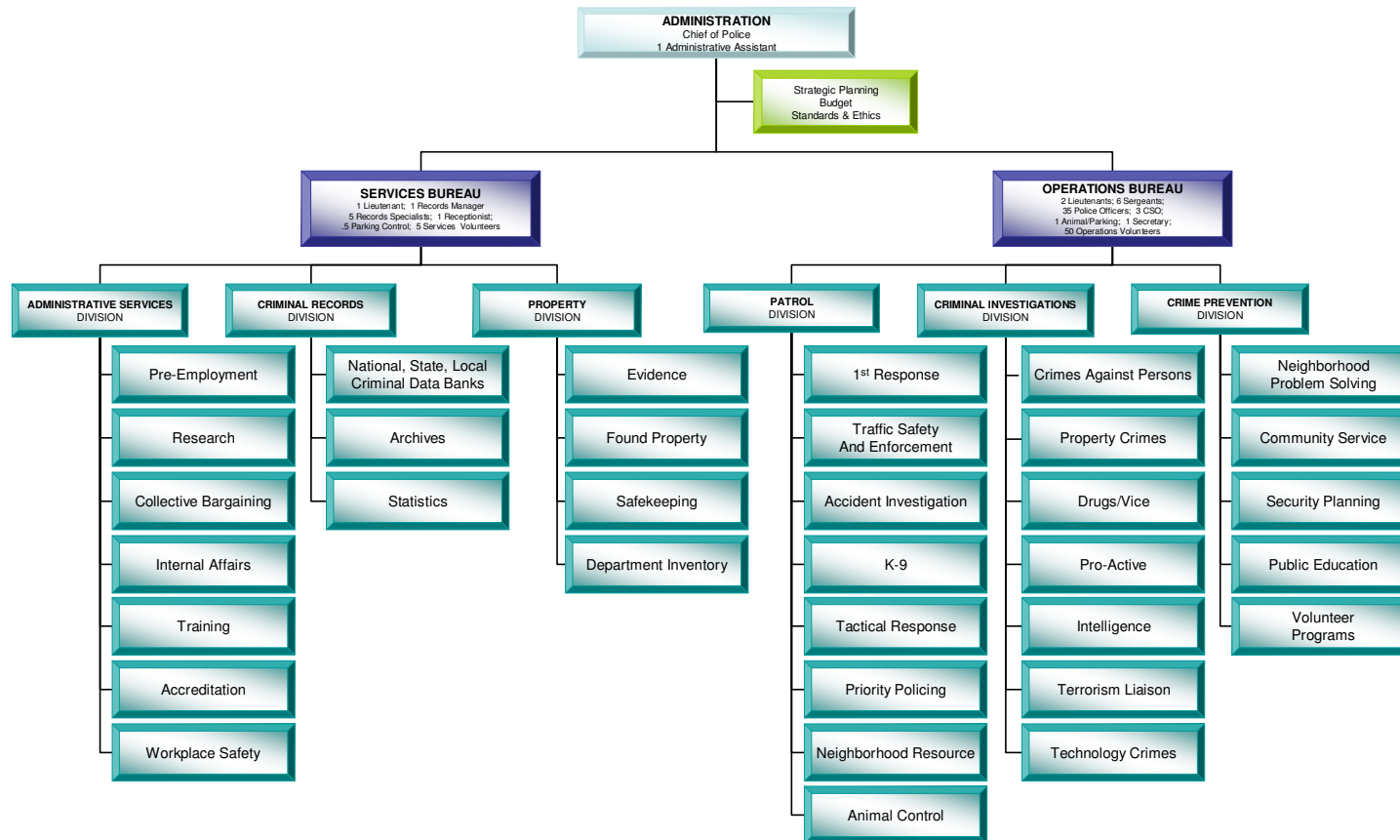
- Records
- Property & Evidence
- Administrative Services



# Mount Vernon Police Department

## Functional Organization

1/08





## CORE VALUES

*What we believe*

The men and women of the Mount Vernon Police Department are dedicated to fulfilling the Department mission and vision, and they commit their energy and ability to continue the history of providing quality service to all citizens of the community. In doing so, the Department strives to uphold a set of core values that represent the basic fabric of the organizational culture:

1. The highest value is placed on the preservation of human life.
2. The principles of a democratic society must be preserved and advanced.
3. The first operational priority is to *prevent* crime.
4. The community must be involved in policing itself.
5. The Department is accountable to the community it serves.
6. The Department is committed to professionalism in all aspects of operations.
7. The Department is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity.
8. The Department must be attuned with a community in continual cultural change.



## **DEPARTMENT PRIORITIES**

### *Fulfilling our policing mission*

Established operational priorities place the highest importance on delivering quality, professional services to the community through open communication and adaptability in addressing problems. While emphasis is placed on building stronger neighborhoods, we continue to employ enforcement practices where necessary, with the ultimate goal of modifying behavior. Protection of our citizens, their property, and visitors to this community are the driving force behind what we do and how it is accomplished.

We are committed to fulfilling our policing mission through the following practices:

1. Employing a highly competent and qualified staff
2. Providing a quick and rapid response to emergencies
3. Effective policing practices to combat criminal activity
4. High visibility of Department personnel and volunteers
5. Building community partnerships and problem solving together
6. Developing a sense of trust and understanding with the community
7. Utilizing prevention practices as a central operating strategy
8. Demonstrating the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics



## STRATEGIC PLANNING

### *Overview of planning purpose and process*

From a service standpoint, this *STRATEGIC PLAN* serves as the Police Department's guide for preparation and response to community issues of crime and public safety. In addition, the Plan provides the basis for annual budget planning, and is the central feature of the Department's performance management system.

The Police Department's planning process involves staff from all assignments and levels of responsibility. The outcome of this annual process is a document that serves as a guide for service level adjustment, program development, resource allocation, and budget preparation.

The process involves a continuous information flow from community members (formal and informal; written and oral). *Sources* of information related to issues of crime and public safety include, but are not limited to:

- Block Watch Meetings
- Citizen complaints/concerns
- Crime statistics
- City Council Meetings
- Business contacts
- Citizen surveys
- Newspapers
- Citizen Boards
- Community networks (*examples: Apartment managers and bank managers networks*)
- Officer observations
- Information "Hot Line"
- Health statistics
- Crime victims
- Commissioned studies (housing, health, crime, population, education, etc.)



## PLANNING PRINCIPLES

### *The standards applied*

In planning for future policing focus in our community, the Police Department adheres to three distinguishing principles: communication, collaboration, and comprehensiveness. *Communication* is two-way and all-level. Ideas and insight are sought after and encouraged at all Department levels. The same is true at the community level. *Collaboration* is imperative if measurable success is to be attained. *Comprehensiveness* becomes a safeguard against omission of important planning elements or policing needs.

The Department employs two needs-assessment models. It combines the attributes of a *needs-based* model with those of a *capacity-focused* model. This approach emphasizes the balanced investigation of neighborhood and other community needs with the discovery of community resources available to assist citizens in investing in themselves and quality-of-life improvement efforts.



## PLANNING METHODOLOGY

### *The system of planning practices*

To ensure accurate planning, ongoing input from the general public is required. Five methods are routinely used by the Department to gather information: (1) Review of publications, including scientific and professional journals; (2) Surveys, internal and external; (3) Site visits of community institutions and service providers; (4) Public meetings such as Block Watch, School Board, and City Council; (5) Statistical review.

**METHOD I:** A review of various publications is an ongoing practice. Scientific journals and other similar documents are reviewed for changes in forensic practices that may impact the Department's procedures or budget. Newspaper articles and editorials are reviewed for current opinion and public attitude toward pertinent issues. Public agency reports are reviewed for demographic updates and other information relevant to police planning.

**METHOD II:** Neighborhoods may be surveyed to learn what residents sense as the most important issues relating to crime, fear, and public safety. In the course of

work, police personnel are regularly questioned to gain a practitioner's viewpoint on the condition of the community and potential solutions to crime problems. The Department web site incorporates a community survey tool that can be easily accessed and sent to the Department electronically.

**METHOD III:** Contact is made with institutions such as schools and churches, as well as social service agencies and other police agencies to discuss common planning issues. In addition, many community needs are determined through communication with service clubs and volunteer organizations.

**METHOD IV:** Direct contact with citizens at public gatherings such as Block Watch Meetings, City Council Meetings, City Council Ward Meetings, school meetings, community networks and action groups are usually excellent opportunities to gain information on what the community feels to be current public safety issues.

**METHOD V:** Local, regional, and national crime statistics are customary sources for data acquisition in police planning.



## **DEVELOPING GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

*A performance measurement tool*

Prior to the preparation of each year's budget, the Police Department holds a series of internal division-level workshops to develop and/or revise goals and objectives. Personnel are asked to plan for their specific divisional needs for the coming year. These needs must align with the Department Mission and Broad Goals for providing responsive service, reducing crime and improving public safety.

The information gained from staff is evaluated for congruency and relevancy in the long-range plan of the organization. Most surviving data are shaped into a preliminary report and combined with information gathered from citizens. Once all information is collected, the next year's goals and objectives are constructed. These goals are intended as short-term steps in the long-range plan. In essence, this information becomes the narrative and justification for annual Department funding requests.



## LONG-RANGE FOCUS

*Generally, what we aim for*

The *STRATEGIC PLAN* contains a section comprised of a less-focused set of vision statements. These statements are developed through a careful, ongoing study of community values, demographic changes, and policing trends. These visions usually do not change dramatically over the short term.



## PLAN EVALUATION

*Adjusting the policing mechanism*

Evaluation of the *STRATEGIC PLAN* is an ongoing process. Adjustments are accomplished through internal administrative mechanisms and, where appropriate, community and City Council Members and other City staff may become involved. During even-numbered years the Plan is rewritten to reflect major changes to Department direction and focus. In odd-numbered years minor adjustments are made to the Plan to reflect Divisional progress toward goals and to ensure the most efficient use of resources.





## POLICING PHILOSOPHY

### *The motivating principles*

Philosophically, the Department espouses a series of linked operating principles that require neighborhood-based partnerships to solve problems relative to crime, fear and neighborhood decay. Fundamentally, there are four primary strategies that form the substance of our service and mission.

1. There must be open and trusting “EXCHANGE” between police and citizens. Communication is two-way. Citizens are heard and involved in the delivery of policing service.
2. “PREVENTION” is the central strategy in all operations. It is, by far, more to the community’s advantage to prevent crime than it is to react to it once it has occurred.
3. Reduction of crime and fear, solutions to neighborhood problems, and general issues of public safety are “SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES”. Safer streets will be realized only if police and citizens collaborate to make it so.
4. If we are to be successful in our mission, we must be “ADAPTABLE”. No two neighborhoods are exactly alike, nor are the factors that make up their problems. It is our preference to apply flexible, tailored policing plans to each problem as identified and mutually validated.

Organizationally, this philosophy is expected to be visible in the work product of all Department members and is a priority consideration in hiring and transfer decisions.



## OPERATIONAL PRIORITY

### *It is of greater benefit to prevent crime than to respond to it.*

The Department’s first operational priority is to prevent crime. Over the past decade, more emphasis has been placed on *prevention* as the Department transitioned from a traditional operational strategy of “patrol and deter” to a broader interactive and community-based strategy that incorporates systematic problem solving as an essential component. Neighborhood improvement projects are regular occurrences and are aimed at

making neighborhoods less vulnerable to crime and disorder. Preventative strategies are at the core of all police efforts to reduce crime and fear. Evaluation of recent prevention-based projects has pointed to improvements in the life quality of affected residents.

An example of this approach to policing is the function called “Neighborhood Resource Officer”. The NRO concept is designed to concentrate pertinent police resources on neighborhoods with extraordinary challenges. The goal is to reduce crime, fear of crime, and neighborhood decay to a level generally equal to the greater community. The effort is coordinated through one specially trained officer. He or she must organize and mobilize that neighborhood to not only help in the reduction of crime, but also to develop strategies to protect the area from the inevitable return of crime due to the periodic introduction of new and additional antisocial influences. This is accomplished through the residents’ collective experiences and knowledge combined with the prevention-specific training and guidance provided by police. This approach may take only a year, or it may take several years of hard work, depending on the complexity of the specific problem.

A central focus on prevention must not be interpreted as a reduced eye for enforcement. No successful policing plan is all one or the other. As long as there is relative deprivation, unsupervised children, unemployment, mental illness and an array of personality disorders, there will be crime. *Prevention* efforts alone have their limits. They may not be able to fully address the actions of impulsive, violent, or predatory offenders. *Enforcement* efforts alone do nothing to get at what is allowing the criminal activity to occur in the first place. As an example, the single enforcement strategy of placing police officers outside of bars and lounges to arrest drunk drivers will undoubtedly result in DUI arrests every night but will do little to stop the problem of drinking and driving.

Ultimately, it is all about creating a balance of strategies that will most likely prevent the problem from reoccurring. For the example above, working with bar owners to prevent over service; working through the media to inform the public; educating children in the schools; and maintaining a consistent enforcement stance against drinking and driving all help to have a combined lasting impact on the problem.



## **FUTURE ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH**

*Policing is all about people; and it requires people to do the work.*

Policing involves people; *people* do the policing, and, *people* are policed. Most citizens will have some interaction with police at one time or another - whether it is a neighbor's emergency, a collision, a nuisance, a crime, suspicious circumstances, or fear. As the population grows, so does the number of people in need of police services. Technology can mitigate that need to a point. In the end, it takes *people*.

The City of Mount Vernon continues to grow, picking up momentum in the last few years. In the year 2025, the population is expected to reach 47,900 residents (MV Development Services, 2008). Planning strategically for this growth becomes extremely important if we are to protect a relatively safe and enjoyable community.

Accurately predicting the staffing needs of a police department is difficult at best. There is no universally applicable staffing standard for police departments because of the many community variables in play. Calls for service, policing philosophy, priorities and practices, population size, composition and density, cultural fabric, reporting practices, transiency of the population, prosecutorial and judicial policies, crime trends, and political climate all have an effect on staffing a police department.

Presuming there will be no change in the Mayor and City Council public safety priorities, it is possible to create, albeit imprecise, a picture of the Police Department five, ten or twenty years into the future. In calculating the number of police officers and support staff that may be needed by the year 2023, the Police Department examines two different sets of data.

**The first set**, although not particularly meaningful, looks at state averages for communities the size of Mount Vernon, based *only on population*. This method of calculation is relatively popular with municipal officials because it is the easiest to understand and to politically defend. It, of course, assumes that the comparable cities have all used valid methods themselves and that the community characteristics have been considered and are similar. This is rarely the case. In 2002, the last time the Department was near the (2007/1.62) state average for officers per 1000 population, it was staffed at a rate of 1.61 officers per 1000 population, and 2.0 total staff per 1000 population. This "blind" calculation might suggest that the Police Department was adequately staffed in 2002. The danger in this method of calculation is that it does not take into consideration the characteristics of this community or the behaviors of the population when compared to another City of equal population. The *average* is only an arithmetically derived figure somewhere near the mid-point of a series of higher and lower numbers. In Mount Vernon, this number of officers is unable to handle all calls for service without regularly seeking

assistance from surrounding jurisdictions. Most often, calls are “stacked” until officers are available. Some of these calls for service are held for non-sworn staff. If this method is applied using the 2008 officers-per-1000 factor of 1.49, to a future population of over 43,000 residents in year 2023, there will be a need for **65 police officers** (@ 2.5% annual population growth) to **94 police officers** (@ 5% annual population growth) in year 2023 to provide today’s level of service. This will require – at a minimum - an average of 1.27 additional officers every year, in addition to necessary support staff – an aggressive venture.

**The second**, and arguably more supportable method of calculating true staffing needs, involves evaluating calls for police service. In 2008, MVPD employed 2.07 officers per 1000 calls for service and 2.67 total staff. Calculations by this method suggest a need for **65 officers** in addition to necessary support staff for a population of over 43,000 in the year 2023. However; this assumes no more than a 2.5% annual growth in calls for service. If there was a 5% annual increase in calls for service to year 2023, there could be a staffing need for up to 94 **officers**. Fortunately, five percent growth each year for fifteen years is unlikely. The actual need will lie somewhere between these figures.

The **point of this discussion** is to emphasize that the Department cannot predict, with certainty, the exact staffing picture for a point in time fifteen or more years away. However, by annually evaluating and updating the data, the Mayor and Council can gain some sense for ongoing staffing needs. By being informed, fiscal challenges can be planned for well in advance.

A staffing spreadsheet follows. It illustrates the likely staffing needs, given different scenarios, over the next fifteen years as the population and call load grow at various rates.

YEAR	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
population - Actual	26232	26460	26670	27060	27720	28210	28710	29390	30150															
population - 2.5%									30150	30914	31667	32469	33281	34113	34966	35840	36736	37654	38595	39560	40549	41563	42602	43667
population - 3.0%									30150	31055	31987	32947	33935	34953	36002	37082	38194	39340	40520	41736	42988	44278	45606	46974
population - 3.5%									30150	31205	32297	33427	34597	35808	37061	38358	39701	41091	42529	44018	45559	47154	48804	50512
population - 4.0%									30150	31356	32610	33914	35271	36682	38149	39675	41262	42912	44628	46413	48270	50201	52209	54297
population - 5.0%									30150	31658	33241	34903	36648	38480	40404	42424	44545	46772	49111	51567	54145	56852	59695	62680
Officers-Actual	40	41	43	43	43	45	45	45	45	45														
Officers per 1000 pop - Actual	1.52	1.55	1.61	1.59	1.55	1.59	1.57	1.53	1.49															
1.49 Officers per 1000 pop 2.5%									1.49	46	47	49	50	51	52	54	55	56	58	59	61	62	64	65
1.49 Officers per 1000 pop 3.0%									1.49	46	48	49	51	52	53	55	57	59	61	62	64	66	68	70
1.49 Officers per 1000 pop 3.5%									1.49	47	48	50	52	54	56	57	59	61	63	65	68	69	72	74
1.49 Officers per 1000 pop 4.0%									1.49	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	61	64	66	69	72	75	78	81
1.49 Officers per 1000 pop 5.0%									1.49	48	50	52	55	57	60	63	66	70	73	77	81	85	89	94
Calls For Service - Actual	20558	20916	21738	21326	24420	25239	24572	24563	21715															
Calls For Service - 2.5%									21715	22258	22814	23384	23969	24568	25182	25812	26457	27118	27796	28491	29203	29933	30681	31448
Calls For Service - 3.0%									21715	22366	23037	23728	24440	25173	25928	26706	27507	28332	29182	30057	30959	31888	32845	33830
Calls For Service - 3.5%									21715	22475	23262	24076	24919	25791	26694	27628	28595	29596	30632	31704	32814	33962	35151	36381
Calls For Service - 4.0%									21715	22584	23487	24426	25403	26419	27476	28575	29718	30907	32143	33429	34766	36157	37603	39107
Calls For Service - 5.0%									21715	22801	23941	25138	26395	27715	29101	30556	32084	33688	35372	37141	38998	40948	42995	45145
Officers - Actual	40	41	43	43	43	45	45	45	45	45														
Officers per 1000 Calls for Service	1.95	1.96	1.98	2.02	1.76	1.75	1.83	1.83	2.07															
2.07 Officers per 1000 CFS 2.5%										46	47	48	49	51	52	54	55	56	58	59	61	62	64	65
2.07 Officers per 1000 CFS 3.0%										47	48	49	51	52	54	56	57	59	61	63	64	66	68	70
2.07 Officers per 1000 CFS 3.5%										47	49	50	52	54	56	58	60	62	64	66	68	71	73	76
2.07 Officers per 1000 CFS 4.0%										47	49	51	53	55	57	59	62	64	67	70	72	75	78	81
2.07 Officers per 1000 CFS 5.0%										48	50	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	74	77	81	85	89	94



## STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

### *Developing a future perspective*

The Police Department operates in a dynamic environment that includes political, social, technological and environmental factors relative to crime and disorder. These factors have a direct impact on programs and operations. The key elements of the Department's Strategic Plan are the goals, objectives and operational strategies that are outlined in this document.

**This section** of the Plan is intended to present the strategic outlook for the Department in the areas of crime prevention, response, and control. It attempts to make sense of the goals and objectives when placed in a strategic context.

Details of Department delivery and outcome measures are not included in this document. They are developed and maintained at the Division level.

As a basis for developing this Strategic Plan, the Department has identified the following key assumptions, that if significantly changed, would affect the ability to implement or maintain effective service programs:

1. The community will continue to grow at a rate that will result in an approximate population of 47,900 residents by year 2025 and the Department will realize staffing levels in accordance with the established staffing plan.
2. The Mayor and City Council will maintain public safety as a high community priority, and will adjust budgets, as appropriate, to keep up with community growth, crime trends, and local, state and federal crime initiatives.
3. The Department will propose crime impact measures that are likely to have the greatest effect on crime, and work with the Mayor and City Council to accomplish their implementation.
4. The Department will philosophically maintain a balanced approach to policing that includes exchange, prevention, adaptability and shared responsibility as core strategic principles, and rapid response, aggressive enforcement, and relentless investigation as the mainstay tactics used against crime and disorder.
5. The effects of the world wide terrorist threat will not significantly impact this community in the foreseeable future.

Based on these planning assumptions, the Strategic Plan for years **2008-2012** has been developed. It includes long-range, mid-range, and annual goals and objectives.

The specific objectives in this document are developed at the Division level with involvement from all personnel. It is the Department's experience that the more involved personnel are in the process of planning, the more successful it is at providing effective and responsive police services. Everyone is committed to reducing crime and protecting the quality of life enjoyed in the community. While many of the objectives may seem insignificant at first glance, they all contain a thread of connectivity to the larger goal of maintaining a safe community.



## ***DEPARTMENTAL BROAD GOALS***

The sustaining Broad Goals of the Mount Vernon Police Department have been in place for many years and remain sound. All organizational plans, including annual division-level goals and objectives, are required to be congruous and subordinate to the Department's Statement of Broad Goals.

### ***Statement of Broad Goals***

- To decrease the amount of actual and perceived criminal activity.
- To deliver the type of police service consistent with community needs and the ideals of contemporary policing practices.
- To create a community awareness of crime problems and methods of increasing the ability to deal with actual or potential criminal activity.
- To cause and maintain a community-wide commitment to community-based policing as an effective means to attaining the Department Mission and ultimately the Department Vision.





## LONG RANGE FOCUS

Although difficult to predict conditions and needs beyond the immediate future, the Department must plan several years ahead. This is especially true when trying to identify funding mechanisms for staffing and equipment needs in support of necessary programs. Through evaluation of the many official studies that are available to us and by staying current on the professional literature, we can formulate a generalized, albeit hazy, vision for the Police Department beyond the year 2012.

It is recognized that preparations for a future time must be fluid. The community is not existing in isolation. Regional and world events will be an influence and will cause a need to continually reshape the plan. With this in mind, there should be an expectation to regularly modify whatever plan is developed for the future of policing in Mount Vernon:

**Focus #1** A well defined public/police **partnership** to identify and provide effective and appropriate police services. By institutionalizing this practice, the word “community” is merely a descriptor for the Department’s policing model. The goal is for “Community” to be a seamless component of policing.

**Focus #2** Fully integrated 21<sup>st</sup> Century **technology** to complement the traditional methods of policing. This will enhance the Department’s ability to efficiently plan for, prevent, and respond to crime, fear, and neighborhood challenges, including those introduced by the e-criminal.

**Focus #3** A working relationship with **non-traditional** partners to address certain calls for service normally handled by publicly funded police agencies and which may be more appropriately handled by the private sector.

**Focus #4** Alternative **correctional programs** in lieu of maximum security incarceration wherein non-violent, non-predatory offenders put their skills to work on community projects. Community accountability will be a factor in offender release.

**Focus #5** The **merging or retooling of certain police functions** within the County to improve consistency and effectiveness. Examples might include various administrative services, emergency management, centralized records, property and evidence, and specialized services such as K-9, major crime investigation, covert and tactical operations. It may be feasible to consolidate specialized police services in the county as criminal justice costs increase and a higher, more consistent standard of service is expected.



**Focus #6** A **semi-permanent police presence** in all neighborhoods and business districts that experience a higher than average number of calls for service. This type of presence is currently well established in the Kulshan Creek and West Hill neighborhoods and has proven highly effective in reducing crime.

**Focus #7** A **county-wide collaboration to address violent crime issues affecting our communities.** The upsurge in gang activity and violence may be best addressed by forming partnerships among criminal justice agencies, schools, churches, and other community members.



## **MID RANGE GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

*2008-2012*

## GOAL #1

### **IMPROVE THE COOPERATION AND COORDINATION OF INTER-AGENCY POLICING EFFORTS AFFECTING THE MOUNT VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT AND COMMUNITY.**

- Objective 1** Continue to encourage all Skagit County police agencies to establish a common philosophy of policing, with strategic policies of a similar tone for engaging and involving the community in the delivery of our services and reducing crime, the fear that it creates and neighborhood decay. *Ongoing.*
- Objective 2** Study the state of police services within Skagit County. Report on what services might yet be combined, added, or deleted in the interest of efficiency and consistent service to the public. *Ongoing. Agencies have been working together sharing services for the Skagit County Interlocal Drug Task Force, County-wide Crisis Negotiations Team and Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC). Discussions have begun involving a county-wide gang strategy, combined traffic emphases and expanding tactical services and capabilities.*
- Objective 3** Develop a county-wide strategy addressing violent crime associated with investigating and monitoring gang activity.  
*Since Fall of 2006, the Skagit County Gang Steering Committee, consisting of Youth and Family Services, schools, law enforcement agencies, ESD 189, community members, and not-profits have been working on a county-wide gang strategy.*
- Objective 4** Support Skagit County in addressing the jail over crowding issue. *There have been many alternatives initiated separate from incarceration which include, work release programs, electric home monitoring, city/county work programs, drug court, mental health court and allowing Supervisors to assign new court dates on certain warrants. The Department has also been involved through Law and Justice in determining the need and potential location for a new jail.*
- Objective 5** Complete the transfer in management of the Skagit County Interlocal Drug Enforcement Unit (SCIDEU) to the Skagit County Sheriff Department. *Occurred in July 2007.*

## GOAL #2

### **MAINTAIN DEPARTMENT EFFECTIVENESS AS THE COMMUNITY GROWS IN AREA AND POPULATION.**

- Objective 1** Update the Police Department Staffing Plan to reflect projected changes in population and call load. *The plan was updated in mid 2008. One additional Community Services Officer was hired in 2008, bringing staff to 45 sworn, 3 CSO's, and 10 support staff.*
- Objective 2** Increase the number of police officers to stay at pace with the Staffing Plan.  
*The Department's three Recruiters routinely attend career fairs and visits colleges and universities in search of qualified candidates. The graduation ceremony for our sixth Preparatory Academy occurred in June. In addition to Public Safety, we are again conducting local tests to increase our pool of candidates.*

- Objective 3** Distribute staff to effectively manage the call load and meet the needs of the community. *In 2006, six officers left the agency; many of whom retired. By mid 2007, two additional officers moved on. This resulted in several officers being pulled from specialty units and re-assigned to meet the needs of the Department and community. During the summer of 2007, three officers were placed in an emphasis role to focus on gang violence and associated crimes. Several individuals were arrested; some receiving lengthy sentences. Mount Vernon Police Department partnered with the Skagit County Sheriff Office and conducted several joint traffic related emphases during the summer of 2007. Feedback from the community was positive; more planned for 2008. Since 2007, ten officers have been hired, which allowed officers to return to traffic, priority policing and investigations. Additional relief is expected in late 2008 and spring 2009, when newly hired officers return from the Academy.*
- Objective 4** Continue to be adaptable and address community issues which develop. *With increased population, we see issues such as traffic congestion and accidents increase. In 2008, the second traffic officer returned to the traffic function. Both officers and other department staff provided an emphasis in this area with the goal of reducing accidents. Gang activity increased in 2007/2008. The priority policing position, which provides an emphasis in this area, was filled in 2008. This officer worked with department staff, school officers and other stakeholders in the community and the result included numerous gang related cases solved department-wide and an improved level of community safety. Officers handling nuisance calls such as noise, fireworks complaints etc. were provided additional tools to address these concerns with the modification of the City Noise Ordinance. Officers worked emphases to address noise related concerns related to boom boxes and fireworks in 2007/2008. With increased density and older neighborhoods transitioning to rental property, the Department dealt with numerous neighborhood related issues, the results of which were improved quality of life in the City.*
- Objective 5** Increase the CSO staffing to allow for a more efficient response to calls for service. *One CSO was hired in 2008. The Department now has three CSO's and a restructure was completed in early 2008, which place all three working out of the Crime Prevention Division as a base; however, still addressing both Crime Prevention issues and providing Patrol relief. The primary change is that all CSO's are under the direction of a single supervisor.*
- Objective 6** Continue to hire officers and support staff which more closely reflects the make up of our community to improve communication between the Department and the community. *Bilingual officers were hired in 2007 and 2008.*
- Objective 7** Continue to plan for increased growth and future planned annexation throughout the City. *Ongoing.*
- Objective 8** Define and implement a plan for having patrol officers assigned geographic areas. *This topic was a take home assignment on the 2008 Lieutenant take home assignment in early 2008. A work group will be established to proceed with the development of a plan.*

- Objective 9** Complete a review and evaluate the need to hire a non-sworn employee to serve as a forensics investigator/part time department computer technician. *Ongoing planning.*

### GOAL #3

#### **PROVIDE EQUIPMENT THAT WILL IMPROVE POLICE CAPABILITY AND KEEP THE DEPARTMENT CURRENT WITH ADVANCEMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY.**

- Objective 1** Continue to acquire updated less-lethal equipment as technology in this area improves. *A K-9 was added to the list of less-lethal options within the Department in 2005 and has proven to be a valuable tool. Additional conducted energy devices were acquired in 2008. We continue to review new technology and evaluate chemical munitions on a regular basis.*
- Objective 2** Efficiently acquire patrol vehicles and other police equipment as necessary. *Patrol vehicles continue to be rotated based on maintenance needs, mileage and per vehicle rotation schedule. Other equipment such as firearms, radios, and soft body armor also continue to be rotated.*
- Objective 3** Improve officer safety with the acquisition of equipment to assist with the detection of hidden dangerous offenders. *In 2007, the Department applied for a Homeland Security Grant that would provide tactical officers with a surveillance camera which could be used with a telegraphic pole to look for dangerous offenders and evidence. This grant was approved and the equipment was received in early 2008.*
- Objective 4** Replace the aging and outdated multi-purpose vehicle for major crime scenes, extended investigations and high risk incidents. *This objective has been added to the City Capital Improvement Plan, however not yet funded.*
- Objective 5** Add two new narrow-band capable tactical channels to the existing radio system to be used by all law enforcement agencies during emergencies. *Homeland Security, Task Force and Northwest Learn funding was used to purchase the equipment necessary for the two newly approved tactical channels that will be ready for use county-wide in summer of 2008.*
- Objective 6** Complete the transition to changing all repeaters, mobile radios and portables to become narrow band compliant by 2009. *Narrow banding was due to be completed in October 2008. Due to a conflicting Snohomish County project, Day Wireless was unable to meet the timeline and narrow banding was put off until October 2009.*
- Objective 7** Continue to develop a community camera system that monitors streets, trails, parks and other public areas. *All of the original equipment was purchased in late 2005. Additional cameras and equipment were purchased and installed in 2006, 2007, and 2008. Cameras can be viewed real time from patrol vehicles and work stations. Video may also be reviewed later to determine suspect identification for crimes that have been previously reported. Additional funding will be sought for continuing to expand and implement this surveillance technology.*

- Objective 8** Construct secondary evidence, animal kennel and covered parking areas at the existing Police and Court Campus. *All permitting required to make use of existing property north of the police and court campus occurred in 2006 and 2007. The site work was completed in the fall of 2007. Preliminary building drawings were completed in 2008 in preparation of going to bid, with construction of the evidence building (phase I) to occur by year end 2008. Animal kennel will be completed in phase II. Completion date of kennels will be determined by available future funding.*

#### GOAL #4

##### **IMPROVE THE GENERAL POLICE RECORDS FUNCTION, TO INCLUDE ISSUES OF STAFFING, ACCESSIBILITY, STORAGE AND RETENTION.**

- Objective 1** Utilizing efficient, up to date storage methods, archive police records, and destroy hard copies as allowed by law and/or accreditation standards. *All but 13 years of hard files have been destroyed as of mid 2008.*
- Objective 2** Modify and implement the General Records Retention Schedule for the Department. *Ongoing.*
- Objective 3** Study and determine the necessity to increase staffing in the Records Division. *Administrative Services Division Lieutenant has been working on a time and needs analysis to address future Records Division needs.*
- Objective 4** Crime data is currently sent to Washington Association of Police Chief's and Sheriff's in summary reporting process. A state mandate requires the reporting to convert to NIBRS by July 2012. Develop a county-wide strategy to report crimes and arrest data using the NIBRS reporting system. *In June 2008, the Skagit County Sheriff and all Police Chief's voted to approve the purchase of a NIBRS Module so we may begin the transition earlier than required.*

#### GOAL #5

##### **DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT AND RESIDENTS OF MOUNT VERNON THAT FOSTERS OPEN COMMUNICATION AND TRUST ON ISSUES RELATING TO COMMUNITY SAFETY AND SECURITY.**

- Objective 1** Maintain the annual Citizen's Police Academy as a mechanism to accomplish the Department's Broad Goals. *The 14<sup>th</sup> Academy was held in 2008 and remains an annual event.*
- Objective 2** Steadily add neighborhoods to the Block Watch program. *Currently the Department has 62 active Block Watch Neighborhoods.*
- Objective 3** Utilize communications links such as the Department Web Site, TV10, radio, newspaper and neighborhood newsletters to provide educational and emergency information. *Ongoing.*

**Objective 4** Continue to attract potential police officer entry candidates through a wide range of strategies and tactics. *The Department's three Recruiters routinely attend career fairs and visits colleges and universities in search of qualified candidates. The graduation ceremony for our sixth Preparatory Academy occurred in June. In addition to Public Safety, we are again conducting local tests to increase our pool of candidates.*

**Objective 5** Maintain the volunteer programs managed through the Crime Prevention Division which enhances our communication ability with the community, provides valuable feedback and helps us police the community. *Currently the Department has 16 Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and 26 Citizens on Proactive Patrol (COPP) volunteers.*

**Objective 6** Continue to develop a partnership with the community which foster open two-way open communication, prevention of crime, shared responsibility and adaptability in how we address and solve community issues which improves community safety. *The Department has many programs and functions which strive to meet this objective. These include Apartment Managers Network, Bank Managers Network, West Hill Neighborhood Resource Officer (NRO), Kulshan Creek NRO, Middle School Resource Officer, TEAM Officer, and Preparatory Academy.*

*Information disseminated through the bank managers network, media, local jail and other law enforcement agencies have resulted in an four bank robbery arrests clearing a total of five bank robberies.*

## 2008 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### *Division-level Planning*

The following goals and objectives are provided by the Division Commanders who worked with assigned staff to devise ways to meet the Department mission. Tactical aspects of this plan are not included for public viewing due to the often sensitive and protected nature of operations. Performance measures and strategic planning schedules are also not included in this document but are retained at the division level.



## PATROL DIVISION

### *2008 Divisional Goals & Objectives*

## **GOAL #1**

**REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF CRIME, FEAR OF CRIME AND DISORDER WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY PROPORTIONATE TO THE GROWTH IN POPULATION BY DIRECTING SERVICES TO NEEDED AREAS.**

### **Objective #1**

- Remain focused on our efforts to control vehicle prowling, stolen vehicles and burglary crimes occurring in Mount Vernon and achieve levels at or below the historical average.

### **Objective #2**

- Continue to work on our gang violence reduction plan. Our focus remains at reducing violence and the spreading of gang subculture that promotes violence & intimidation.

### **Objective #3**

Continue our efforts to develop customized crime/disorder reduction plans when activity affecting our community rises beyond levels normally experienced.

## **GOAL #2**

**IMPROVE THE WAY PATROL DIVISION SERVICES ARE DELIVERED TO THE COMMUNITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF INCREASING EFFICIENCY, REDUCING COST AND IMPROVING OUR OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS.**

### **Objective #1**

- Complete the implementation of getting access to city cameras into our patrol vehicles and work stations within the office.

### **Objective #2**

- Develop a program to infuse community volunteers into the abatement of graffiti. Two churches have expressed an interest to date.

### **Objective #3**

- Review our City camera system for locations we could expand to in the future.

### **GOAL #3**

**CONTINUE OUR STAFF DEVELOPMENT COMMITMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF INCREASING SKILLS AND ABILITIES TO MEET FUTURE OPERATIONAL AND LEADERSHIP NEEDS.**

#### **Objective #1**

- Provide at least eight hours of continuing education to officers who have successfully completed the Lead Officer selection process.

#### **Objective #2**

- Complete continuing education requirements for officers moving into special assignments.

#### **Objective #3**

- Provide skill based refresher training at the squad level.

#### **Objective #4**

- Continue our squad level commitments to training. Sergeants will see that at least three squad level in-service training opportunities take place during the year. Topics may contemporary leadership, police skills or career development preparing officers for future assignments

#### **Objective #5**

- Complete orientation, field training and transition to patrol squads for the officers hired in 2008.

### **GOAL #4**

**REDUCE THE FEAR OF CRIME AND INCIDENCE OF CRIME BY INCREASING THE COMMUNITY'S AWARENESS OF DISORDER ISSUES AFFECTING OUR COMMUNITY AND HELPING THEM UNDERSTAND THEIR ROLE IN DELIVERING POLICE SERVICES**

#### **Objective #1**

- Provide at least eight hours of continuing education to officers who have successfully completed the Lead Officer selection process.



## Objective #2

- Complete continuing education requirements for officers moving into special assignments.

### GOAL #5

**COLLABORATE WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND CITY DEPARTMENTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF SHARING RESOURCES AND INCREASING OUR EFFECTIVE ABILITY TO POLICE THE COMMUNITY.**

## Objective #1

- Review our 2007 firework plan with the Fire Department and create a plan for the fourth year of the fireworks ban.

## Objective #2

- Work with Skagit County's gang violence prevention planning group to develop a second community summit in the first quarter of 2008.

## Objective #3

- Organize discussions with other agencies about combining range training activities to take better advantage of the limited resources.



### **SPECIAL OPERATIONS** *2008 Divisional Goals & Objectives*

**KULSHAN CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE**

**OFFICER JON GERONDALE**

**GOAL #1**

**CONTINUE OUR COMMITMENT TO REDUCING CRIME AND DISORDER WITHIN THE KULSHAN CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD TO LEVELS CONSISTENT WITH THE GREATER COMMUNITY**

**GOAL #2**

**CONTINUE TO DEVELOP POLICING SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH KULSHAN CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS AND THE DEMANDS OF THE RESIDENTS, BUSINESS OWNERS, AND SCHOOLS WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.**

**GOAL #3**

**MAINTAIN OUR COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS AND MVPD PERSONNEL WITH EDUCATION ON CURRENT CRIMINAL ISSUES IMPACTING THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND CRIME PREVENTION TECHNIQUES.**

**WEST HILL NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE**

**OFFICER DAVID SHACKLETON**

**GOAL #1**

**CONTINUE OUR COMMITMENT TO REDUCING CRIME AND DISORDER WITHIN THE WEST HILL NEIGHBORHOOD TO LEVELS CONSISTENT WITH THE GREATER COMMUNITY**

**GOAL #2**

**PROVIDE POLICING SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH THE NEEDS OF WEST HILL RESIDENTS.**

**GOAL #3**

**CONTINUE TO PROVIDE EDUCATION TO RESIDENTS, SCHOOL STAFF, STUDENTS, AND PARENTS REGARDING THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE WEST HILL NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE OFFICER.**

**GOAL #4**

**COORDINATE OR FACILITATE RESOURCES FOR WEST HILL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES IN AN EFFORT TO REDUCE CRIME AND NEIGHBORHOOD DECAY.**

**GOAL #5**

**MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH OTHER DIVISIONS WITHIN THE MOUNT VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION REGARDING ACTIVITY AND PROGRAMMING OCCURRING WITHIN WEST HILL.**

**PRIORITY POLICING UNIT**

**OFFICER CHRIS ZIMMER**

**GOAL #1**

**REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF VEHICLE PROWL OCCURRING IN MOUNT VERNON. MAINTAIN LEVELS AT OR BELOW 688 FOR A YEAR PERIOD.**

**GOAL #2**

**REDUCE CRIME AND FEAR OCCURRING IN IDENTIFIED AREAS OF OUR COMMUNITY TO LEVELS EQUAL OR BELOW THE COMMUNITY AVERAGE.**

**GOAL #3**

**CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE GANG ENCROACHMENT IN OUR COMMUNITY KEEPING THE LEVEL AT OR BELOW THE LEVELS EXPERIENCED BETWEEN 1998 & 2000.**

**GOAL #4**

**MONITOR THE PROGRESS OF PREVIOUS PROJECTS TO ENSURE POLICING STRATEGIES ARE WORKING EFFECTIVELY.**

**TRAFFIC UNIT**

**OFFICERS RICK VANDERGRIEND & TOM WENZL**

**GOAL #1**

**EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY REGARDING FACTORS THAT INCREASE DRIVER AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND REDUCE THE POTENTIAL OF BECOMING INVOLVED IN A MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISION.**

**GOAL #2**

**PROVIDE CONSISTENT EDUCATION, ENFORCEMENT ENGINEERING AND EVALUATION ATTENTION TO AREAS OF THE COMMUNITY DETERMINED TO HAVE A HIGH FREQUENCY OF TRAFFIC RELATED PROBLEMS.**

**GOAL #3**

**COLLABORATE WITH OTHER POLICE AGENCIES AND CITY DEPARTMENTS TO MAXIMIZE THE USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND PROVIDE A PROFICIENT LEVEL OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY.**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL RESOURCE**

**OFFICER MIKE OSTER**

**GOAL #1**

**DEVELOP AN OPEN AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS, STAFF, AND PARENTS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND AND RESOLVE ISSUES FACING SCHOOLS AND POLICE.**

**GOAL #2**

**PROVIDE A CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT THAT IS SAFE, SECURE, AND FREE OF CRIME FEAR.**

**GOAL #3**

**PROVIDE A CONSISTENT LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ACTIVITIES ON SCHOOL CAMPUS AND OTHER DIVISIONS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT.**

**GOAL #3**

**DELIVER POLICING SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH INDIVIDUAL CAMPUS NEEDS.**



**CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION**  
*2008 Divisional Goals & Objectives*

**GOAL #1**

**Continue the commitment to communication and cooperation between law enforcement and pawn brokers.**

### **Objective #1**

Provide administrative oversight of the Department's LeadsOnline account to:

- Ensure proper transaction data entry by pawn shops.
- Assist secondhand dealers in complying with RCW/City Ordinance reporting requirements.
- Provide system access and training to officers and staff.
- Assist in the recovery of stolen property through the use of Saved Searches.

Responsible person is Detective Nelson.

### **Objective #2**

Maintain and update the pawn block list to be distributed to shops. Responsible person is Detective Nelson.

### **Objective #3**

Support a cooperative approach to pawn shop investigations and reporting requirements amongst Skagit County Law Enforcement Agencies:

- Conduct RCW/ordinance compliance checks/property audits.
- Study and determine the feasibility of implementing a county-wide pawn block list.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the LeadsOnline system.

Responsible person is Detective Nelson.

### **Objective #4**

Continue the development of a system to check pawn transaction records for persons unlawfully possessing firearms due to domestic violence and felony convictions. Responsible person is Detective Nelson & Mahoney.

### **Objective #5**

Continue to work with pawn shop owners/employees to facilitate information exchange and cooperation:

- Monthly visits to pawn shops to address any concerns.
- Annually research law enforcement property holds on pawned property to obtain current status. This will allow shops to release property that no longer needs to be held for investigation and will identify cases where additional law enforcement follow up is necessary.
- Annually verify pawn shop city business licenses, relevant firearms licenses, and alarm permits.

Responsible person is Detective Nelson.

### **Objective #6**

Work with firearms/ammunition dealers in the City of Mount Vernon to ensure compliance with and understanding of firearms licensing requirements:

- ATF License.
- Washington State DOL License.
- Fingerprinting/background checks of required employees.

Responsible person is Detective Nelson.

## **GOAL #2**

**To maintain a level of Divisional effectiveness equal to that attained in 2007.**

### **Objective #1**

Prepare rapid deployment training for investigators. The training will focus on likely scenarios that may be encountered by investigators during working hours. The use of simunitions will also be implemented into this training. The training will also address equipment and clothing worn primarily by investigators. Responsible person is Detective Thompson.

### **Objective #2**

Manage monthly sex offender residence check program, tracking addresses, facilitating level three community notifications, assigning officers as needed, attending County sex offender classification meetings and sending cases to the Sheriff's Office for filing when necessary. Provide training updates to patrol regarding RSO/RKO address verification and failure to register investigations as needed. Have community notifications and sex offender bulletins translated into Spanish. Responsible person is Detective Thompson.

### **Objective #3**

Conduct community meeting(s) on sex offenders as determined necessary as a team consisting of the Mount Vernon Police, Prosecutor's Office, Adult Probation and Parole, Juvenile Probation, other law enforcement agencies and schools in an effort to educate the community. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman & Detective Thompson.

### **Objective #4**

Provide Detective Nelson with continuing computer forensics education and training to further the Department's ability to conduct computer-related investigations and evidence processing. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman & Detective Nelson.

### **Objective #5**



Study and initiate the development of Mount Vernon Police Department computer forensic-related policy and procedures. Responsible person is Detective Nelson.

#### **Objective #6**

Continue to add to and update the investigative contact list as additional resources for investigating missing persons, missing children, homicide suspects, or fugitive cases become available. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman.

#### **Objective #7**

Ensure that all investigators are registered for the required core schools in 2008. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman & Lieutenant Cammock.

#### **Objective #8**

Develop and implement a check list for review of all domestic physical and sexual assault and stalking cases for follow up by a criminal investigator. Responsible person is Detective Mahoney & Sergeant Shipman.

#### **Objective #9**

Research and determine the feasibility of training a detective in the operation of the polygraph machine. Responsible person is Detective Marker.

- Cost Analysis
  - Education
  - Equipment
  - Impact to Division and Department
    - Scheduling
    - Call outs
    - Policy changes
- Needs and Impact study
  - Employment
  - Criminal

### **GOAL #3**

**Improve communication between Criminal Investigations Division, other Divisions, and the community.**

#### **Objective #1**

Investigators will occasionally attend Patrol roll-call sessions to exchange information of mutual interest. Investigators will be assigned to attend roll calls during their assigned on-call week. In addition, each detective will be assigned to attend RIG and Gang meetings on a rotating basis monthly. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman.

## **Objective #2**

During the year investigator(s) will conduct proactive assignments as needed, based on community crime problems that are discovered. These assignments may incorporate working individually or with Crime Prevention to distribute flyers to businesses. Investigators may also work with Patrol attending briefings, conducting pro-active operations, and assisting Patrol with major follow-up and proactive investigations. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman.

## **Objective #3**

Criminal investigators will conduct training sessions with Patrol for the purpose of instruction on specific needs at the request of Patrol Sergeants. Investigations will attempt to identify specific training topics that need to be brought to specific officers and squads in an effort to maximize experience and efficiency of departmental personnel. (Responsible person Sergeant Shipman.)

- Provide training in patrol response to unattended death scenes. (Responsible person Sergeant Shipman.)
- Conduct patrol officer training for the purpose of instruction on computer forensics, investigation, evidence collection, warrants, and case law. Responsible person is Detective Nelson.

## **Objective #4**

Conduct weekly Divisional meetings to discuss cases and issues of interest (goals, training, tasks and assignments etc.) to the investigative unit. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman.

### **GOAL #4**

**Provide “public education” to the community that identifies the resources of the Investigations Division, provides actual crime incidents vs. perceptions, and aids in the prevention of crimes.**

## **Objective #1**

Commit to teaching of Citizens and Preparatory Academy in the classroom providing information on the Investigator’s role and provide hands on experience of equipment

during the Citizens Academy mock scene fun day. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman and Detective Thompson & Nelson.

## **Objective #2**

At least one investigator will attend the annual Bank Managers Network Meeting. Responsible person is Detective Marker/Mahoney.

### **GOAL #5**

**Continue the commitment to communication and training between criminal justice agencies.**

## **Objective #1:**

Conduct monthly meetings of police investigators and other criminal justice professionals within the region. The purpose will be to exchange information regarding gangs, drugs, and cases of mutual interest. An additional meeting will be held following these monthly meetings with agencies within Skagit County and prosecutorial staff to network, share information, and promote cooperation. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman & Detective Marker.

## **Objective #2:**

Conduct monthly departmental case progress review of current cases to evaluate and refocus resource allocation. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman.

## **Objective #3:**

Conduct meetings with prosecutorial staff to discuss inter-agency issues of cooperation and communication. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman.

## **Objective #4:**

Sponsor at least two training sessions to local law enforcement through the monthly investigators meetings. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman.

## **Objective #5:**

A one-day training session will be conducted with the assistance of the WSP Firearms Section in order to familiarize the Skagit County Prosecutor's Office with the forensic capabilities of the WSP Crime Lab in reference to weapon and ammunition identification and provide an opportunity for the Prosecutors to familiarize themselves with different weapons and their capabilities in order to assist in prosecution of criminal cases. Responsible person is Sergeant Shipman.

### **Objective #6:**

Continue to attend meetings involving the creation and implication of a CAC (Child Advocate Center) and provide input useful to the operations of a CAC. Responsible person Is Sergeant Shipman & Detective Marker.

### **Objective #7:**

Upon completion of a Skagit County Sexual Assault Protocol, provide squad level training to patrol and detectives. Responsible person is Detective Marker.

### **Objective #8:**

Continue research based on current technology, equipment needs for the purpose of acquiring necessary investigative tools such as computer crime technology, enhanced photo and video imaging, multi-jurisdictional interfacing. Responsible person is Lieutenant. Cammock.



## **CRIME PREVENTION DIVISION**

*2008 Divisional Goals & Objectives*

### **GOAL #1**

**CONTINUE THE COMMITMENT TO NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK WATCH AS AN  
EFFECTIVE PREVENTION TOOL.**

### **Objective #1**

Continue semiannual Block Watch Captains Meetings as a means of communicating new Information, procedures, and training, etc. Responsible person is CSO Boudreau.

### **Objective #2**

Publish two newsletters, fall and summer, for all Block Watch Captains and their neighborhood members. Maintain an e-mail data base as a means of further communication and dissemination of information with Block Watch Captains. Responsible person is CSO Boudreau.

### **Objective #3**

Publish two newsletters, fall and summer, for all Block Watch Captains and their neighborhood members. Maintain an e-mail data base as a means of further communication and dissemination of information with Block Watch Captains. Responsible person is CSO Boudreau.

### **Objective #4**

Accomplish new Block Watch neighborhoods throughout the year, and do ongoing monthly Block Watch updates with the captains, utilize CSO and COPP to check status, interest, and development in their neighborhoods. Responsible person is CSO Boudreau.

## **GOAL #2**

**CONTINUE THE COMMITMENT TO REDUCE CRIME, DISORDER, DECAY AND FEAR  
BY UTILIZING “PUBLIC EDUCATION” AS A MEANS OF IMPACTING PERCEPTIONS  
OF CRIME AND ACTUAL INCIDENTS OF CRIME.**

### **Objective 1**

Continue providing presentations and programs for the community, business people and other agencies. This is to be accomplished throughout the year. Examples of presentations and programs that we are actively conducting are basic street sense, burglary, child safety, CPTED, personal safety, robbery safety, shoplifting, work place violence, drug awareness, theft/fraud prevention, Domestic Violence ID theft, Homeland Security and others to be determined. Responsible person is Sgt. Don.

### **Objective 2**

Continue commitment to utilizing the radio, television, SCALA, newspaper and other media sources as a means of providing public service announcements and to deliver education and prevention tools to the community on crime prevention topics. Responsible person is Sgt Mike Don.

### **Objective 3**

Conduct a review of the Citizen Academy program to ensure topics, schedule and handouts maximize participants learning experience. Responsible person is CSO Jill Boudreau.

### **GOAL #3**

**MAXIMIZE THE USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO PROVIDE EXTRA SERVICE FUNCTIONS AND PROGRAMS.**

### **Objective 1**

Continue with our customer support patrol function. Each Crime Prevention Officer assigned to the unit will work one shift per month to focus on the needs of problem neighborhoods, existing neighborhood projects, and develop better communication with the Patrol Division through interaction and attending periodic roll call sessions. Exception public education officer will work this detail only during the summer months. Responsible person is Sgt. Don.

### **Objective 2**

Continue to revitalize, energize and recruit our COPP, RSVP and other office volunteers. Look for ways to involve all volunteers more in the community. Continue to utilize volunteer services at community events throughout the year as needed. Utilize the database that has been developed for all volunteers as a means of establishing additional communication with Department volunteers. Responsible person is Sgt. Don.

### **Objective 3**

Continue Crime Prevention commitment to partnering with the community by working community events such as: Downtown Halloween event, Downtown Christmas Parade, Fourth of July Activities, Children's Art Festival, Youth Appreciation Week, Skagit Valley Herald Christmas party and other deemed appropriate community activities. Responsible person is Sgt. Don

### **Objective 4**

Utilize the Community Beautification Project grant monies as a tool to improve the quality of life in problematic neighborhoods and attempt to establish a continuing community partnership through Block Watch and other department programs. Responsible person is Sgt. Don.

#### **Objective 5**

Maintain an ongoing review of COPP and RSVP programs and complete COPP Policy Manual update. Responsible person is Sgt. Don

#### **Objective 6**

Continue the commitment to drug use prevention through participation in the Meth Watch and Drug Court Programs. Responsible person is Sgt. Don

#### **GOAL #4**

**CONTINUE OUR PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS AIMED TOWARDS EDUCATING THE YOUTH OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH VIOLENCE AND DRUG RESISTANCE EDUCATION.**

#### **Objective 1**

Continue Crime Preventions commitment at the Skagit County Fair, various school activities and other community activities. Responsible person is Officer Dowhaniuk.

#### **Objective 2**

Continue to support and implement the "Preparatory Academy" for high school juniors and seniors who have an interest in policing as a career. Responsible person is Officer's Dowhaniuk and Shackelton.

#### **GOAL #5**

**CONTINUE THE BANK MANAGERS NETWORK PROGRAM.**

#### **Objective 1**

Work with local bank managers to continue the existing partnership that has developed and network by providing information exchange and training between the banking community and law enforcement once a year. Responsible person is Sgt. Don.

#### **GOAL #6**

**Continue to proactively identify and solve neighborhood issues and concerns to include quality of life issues, neighborhood problem solving, intervention and neighborhood decay.**

##### **Objective 1**

Use crime analysis as a means of identifying problematic areas and exchanging this information to other divisions. Responsible person is Sgt Don.

##### **Objective 2**

Work with volunteers, Department personnel, and community members to identify and solve issues that negatively affect the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Responsible person is Sgt Don.

##### **Objective 3**

Conduct two Managers Network Meetings (summer, winter) to provide training for apartment managers and facilitate discussion relating to common neighborhood problems and solutions. Responsible person is CSO Jill Boudreau.

#### **GOAL #7**

**CONTINUE THE GRAFFITI ABATEMENT PROGRAM USING THE CSO, VOLUNTEERS AND OTHER RESOURCES TO PROACTIVELY WORK GRAFFITI AS IT TURNS UP IN THE COMMUNITY.**

##### **Objective 1**

CSO and volunteers will consistently walk the downtown area to look for new graffiti and will work with property owners in its removal. Responsible person is CSO Boudreau.



## Objective 2

Utilize the City of Mount Vernon Work Program, Skagit County Jail Work Release Program and volunteers as a resource in helping with graffiti eradication. Responsible person is CSO Boudreau.



## ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

*2008 Divisional Goals & Objectives*

### **GOAL #1**

**To continue to strengthen the Department's commitment to provide all employees and volunteers a safe workplace.**

#### **Objective 1**

The Department Safety Committee will continue to meet quarterly. To conduct the first meeting by January 31, 2008.

#### **Objective 2**

To have each member of the Department Safety Committee attend one L&I workshop. To be accomplished by May 31, 2008.

#### **Objective 3**

To attend two L& I workshops. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

#### **Objective 4**

To partner with the Mount Vernon Fire Department in upgrading the respiratory mask fit test machine. To be completed by March 31, 2008.

#### **Objective 5**

To conduct a fire inspection of the police/court campus. To be completed by December 31, 2008.

#### **Objective 6**

To provide respiratory protection training to criminal investigations, tactical team members and supervisors. To be completed by September 30, 2008.

#### **Objective 7**

To conduct an on-site workplace safety inspection of the police/campus by the department safety committee. To be completed by December 31, 2008.

### **GOAL #2**

**To continue the Department's commitment to attracting, recruiting and selection of qualified candidates.**

#### **Objective 1**

To conduct the fifth Preparatory Academy class. To be accomplished by July 31, 2008.

## **Objective 2**

To schedule and conduct a publicsafetytesting.com test in the local area. To be accomplished by July 31, 2008.

## **Objective 3**

To have the recruitment team attend eight career/job fairs. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

## **Objective 4**

To conduct a “brainstorming exercise” to identify current and future recruitment needs. To be accomplished by January 31, 2008.

## **Objective 5**

To continue to update the photos and brochures used by the recruitment team. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

## **Objective 6**

To fill the four funded Police Officer vacancies. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

## **Objective 7**

To fill the Records Manager vacancy. To be accomplished by July 31, 2008.

## **Objective 8**

To meet quarterly with the recruiter’s to discuss recruitment trends and successes. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

## **Objective 9**

To fill the Community Service Officer position. To be accomplished by July 31, 2008.

**GOAL #3**  
**To continue the Department’s commitment to the State Accreditation Program.**

**Objective 1**

To continue to update the accreditation files. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

**Objective 2**

To complete preparation for the mock on-site assessment. To be accomplished by November 30, 2008

**Objective 3**

To successfully complete the mock on-site assessment. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008

**Objective 4**

To prepare a time-line for the on-site assessment. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

**GOAL #4**

**To adopt or update the Department's operational policies and procedures.**

**Objective 1**

To continue the review and revisions of department policies and procedures. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

**Objective 2**

To complete policies on the new accreditation standards. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

**Objective 3**

To review and update the Department New Employee Safety Orientation Manual. To be accomplished by May 31, 2008.

**Objective 4**

To review and update the Department Air/Bloodborne Pathogen Policy. To be completed by December 31, 2008.

**Objective 5**

To review and update the Police/Court Emergency Preparedness Plan. To be completed by August 31, 2008.

**GOAL #5**

**To continue to strengthen the Department's commitment for contemporary police training.**

**Objective 1**

To meet with the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission to reconfirm their commitment for regional training at the police campus. To be completed by August 31, 2008.

**Objective 2**

To complete a training needs assessment of all employees. To be completed by August 31, 2008.

**Objective 3**

To host twelve training sessions at the police campus. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008

**Objective 4**

To upgrade the firearms record system with a new software program. To be completed by December 31, 2008

**Objective 5**

To review the effectiveness of the police refresher skills training course. To be accomplished by July 30, 2008.

**Objective 6**

To conduct level-two defensive tactics training for all commissioned officers. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

**Objective 7**

To recertify the two Defensive Tactic Instructors at the one and two defensive levels. To be accomplished by July 30, 2008.

### **Objective 8**

To conduct updated air and bloodborne training to all employees. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.

### **Objective 9**

To conduct updated domestic violence training to all commissioned officers. To be accomplished by December 31, 2008.



## **RECORDS AND PROPERTY DIVISIONS**

*2008 Divisional Goals & Objectives*

### **RECORDS DIVISION**

**GOAL #1**  
**PROVIDE THE BEST POSSIBLE SERVICE INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY.**

**GOAL #2**  
**IMPROVE OVERALL EFFICIENCY.**

**GOAL #3**  
**MAKE MORE EFFICIENT USE OF STORAGE SPACE.**

**GOAL #4**  
**CONTINUE TO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE BASE OF DIVISION PERSONNEL.**

## **PROPERTY DIVISION**

**GOAL #1**  
**IMPROVE PROPERTY HANDLING EFFICIENCY.**

**GOAL #2**  
**DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A PROPERTY CUSTODIAN NETWORK IN THE REGION.**



## CLOSING

This document serves as a future planning guide on how we can best deliver policing services to this community. Planning is vital in our efforts in achieving success as an organization; for without it, we would be reactive and move forward without clear direction, purpose and resolve. This agency has a long standing tradition of planning for the future, anticipating community issues, obstacles, and potential set-backs.

The issues affecting this community are continuing to change. We have seen an increase in population, which leads to growth. With increased growth and the attractiveness this community offers, the potential for criminal activity increases. Policing is only one element in a broader community-wide effort to provide a safe, prosperous, and enjoyable environment. Knowing this, we must continue to work internally and externally to plan for a positive future for Mount Vernon. We have seen great successes from our staff



working in collaboration with other community stake holders to address issues such as youth violence, drug activity, gang violence, theft and other forms of criminal activity. By working together on these and other important community issues, we stand a greater chance of success. The difficult times we are now facing must be addressed community-wide with overwhelming resolve for without it we are not united and our chance of making meaningful and positive change will be diminished with resources being disconnected, duplicated or even wasted.

The Mount Vernon Police Department, as an organization within the community, continues to be a committed partner in creating neighborhoods and business districts free from violence and other adverse conditions that allow victimization to thrive.

Kenneth A. Bergsma  
Chief of Police